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THE BAPTIST

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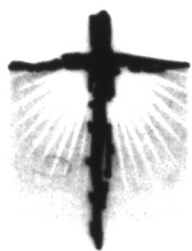
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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Miss. inmates graduate seminary

By Michael McCormack
Baptist Press

PARCHMAN, Miss. (BP and local reports) — At the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, 17 inmates and their families gathered in the prison's visitation building to celebrate a first in the state's prison system's history — a seminary graduation ceremony.

Those inmates made up the first graduating class of New Orleans Seminary's new Parchman extension center, which began offering classes in 2005. The NOBTS undergraduate ministry training at Parchman joins the seminary's inaugural prison extension center at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola.

The program at Parchman was jumpstarted by Mississippi First Lady Marsha Barbour. Shortly after her husband Haley took office in 2004, she began to press for a more robust educational program within the state's prison system.

With the support of Parchman Superintendent Lawrence Kelly and Parchman Extension Center director Johnny Bley, 34 students began coursework in 2005 for the associate's degree in Christian ministry.

The support of Mississippi Baptists has been crucial to the program's success.

"Gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering provide textbooks and compensation for seminary instructors," said David Michel, associate executive director for mission strategy at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB). "The educational partnership with New Orleans Seminary enhances the mission intentions of Mississippi Baptists who are concerned about criminal justice ministry."

Criminal justice specialists Charles Jones and John Henry work statewide in the correctional system, representing MBCB.

"They enlist and train prison volunteers who lead evangelism and discipleship programs in many regional correctional facilities and local jails across the state," Michel said.

Jones and Henry can be contacted through the MBCB Men's Ministry Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside



GRADUATION DAY — New Orleans Seminary President Chuck Kelley (left) and Mississippi First Lady Marsha Barbour talk following the graduation ceremony at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, the first for the seminary extension center based there. (BP photo by Michael McCormack)

Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: cwright@mbcb.org. Web site: www.mbcb.org.

The challenge for the training program is twofold: to make a lasting impact on inmates while they are in prison and to prepare them for life again in the "free world." Students of the program and their families leave no doubt as to its success so far.

Debra Harris, who saw her son Benjamin receive an associate's degree in Christian ministry at Parchman, quickly approached representatives of the seminary after arriving from Oklahoma to express her thanks.

"Are you all responsible for this?" she asked with a smile. "As a parent, I want to thank you so much for making this possible."

Harris said her son, now 31, has been at Parchman 12 years. "I remember when this first started he'd kind of hit a point in his life where [he realized] that he was going to be here forever. It was sinking in and weighing heavy. Before he came here, I had prayed for something to happen to him to change his life."

"He ended up here, and in a very strange way, this was the best thing that could have happened to him," Harris said.

Demetrius Bennett, a native of East St. Louis, Ill., who graduated with an associate's degree, said other students in the program had the biggest impact on him. Bennett said his involvement in gang activity brought him to prison 19 years ago. God used the transformation Bennett saw in the lives of former rival gang members to get his attention.

"I'm looking at guys who used to be gang members, and when I gave my life to the Lord, we weren't adversaries like I thought," Bennett said. "When we came together with the Lord, we began fighting on the same team."

Bennett graduated just in time, because he anticipates being released in August. Upon his release, he said he plans to use his testimony as a former gang member as a tool for ministering to teenagers and helping them stand up against peer pressure.

At the May 23 graduation, NOBTS President Chuck Kelley urged the students to remain steadfast in their mission by pointing to another inmate minister — the Apostle Paul.

"Gentlemen, that is what God wants you to know," Kelley said. "From the heart of this prisoner in Rome to

your hearts here at Parchman, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, whatever you have accomplished, you haven't even begun yet to see all that Jesus has to do for you and what He wants to do through you."

Michel pointed out that the criminal justice partnership is just one ministry of state missions funded by gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.

"The launch of the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering emphasis begins this month with posters and planning guides being mailed to all churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention," Michel pointed out.

"The goal for the 2007 Margaret Lackey Offering is \$2.2 million. Most congregations conduct their state mission emphasis in September and October," he said.

For more information on the Margaret Lackey Offering, contact Michel at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3231 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 231. E-mail: dmichel@mbcb.org. Web site: www.mbcb.org.



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Atheists: sadly misguided

A pair of books has begun to climb all the important best-seller lists, as the authors and publishers make the promotional rounds of talk shows and lectures. Unfortunately, both books focus on the premise that the malignant nature of religion has through the years been responsible for many of the ills of the world.

Anglo-American commentator and social/political gadfly Christopher Hitchens, author of *God Is Not Great*, minces no words in his disgust for religion. In his book, which he says he has been contemplating from the age of nine, he writes:

The level of intensity fluctuates according to time and place, but it can be stated as a truth that religion does not, and in the long run

cannot, be content with its own marvelous claims and sublime assurances. It must seek to interfere with the lives of nonbelievers, or heretics, or adherents of other faiths. It may speak about the bliss of the next world, but it wants power in this one. This is only to be expected. It is, after all, wholly

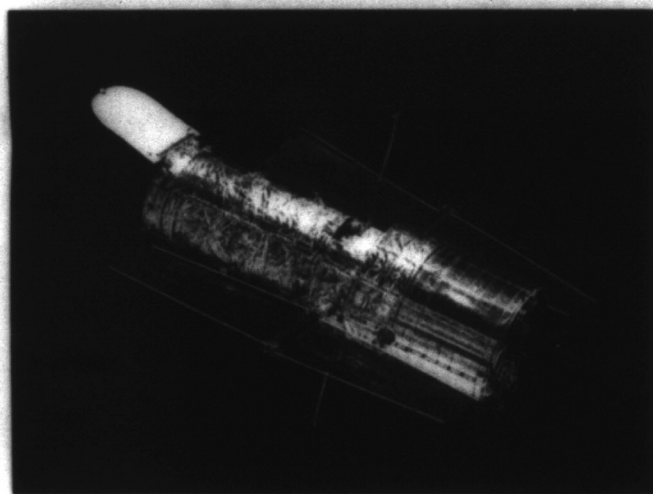
man-made. And it does not have the confidence in its own various preachings even to allow coexistence between different faiths.

British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins takes on the Bible, among other religious topics, in his book, *The God Delusion*:

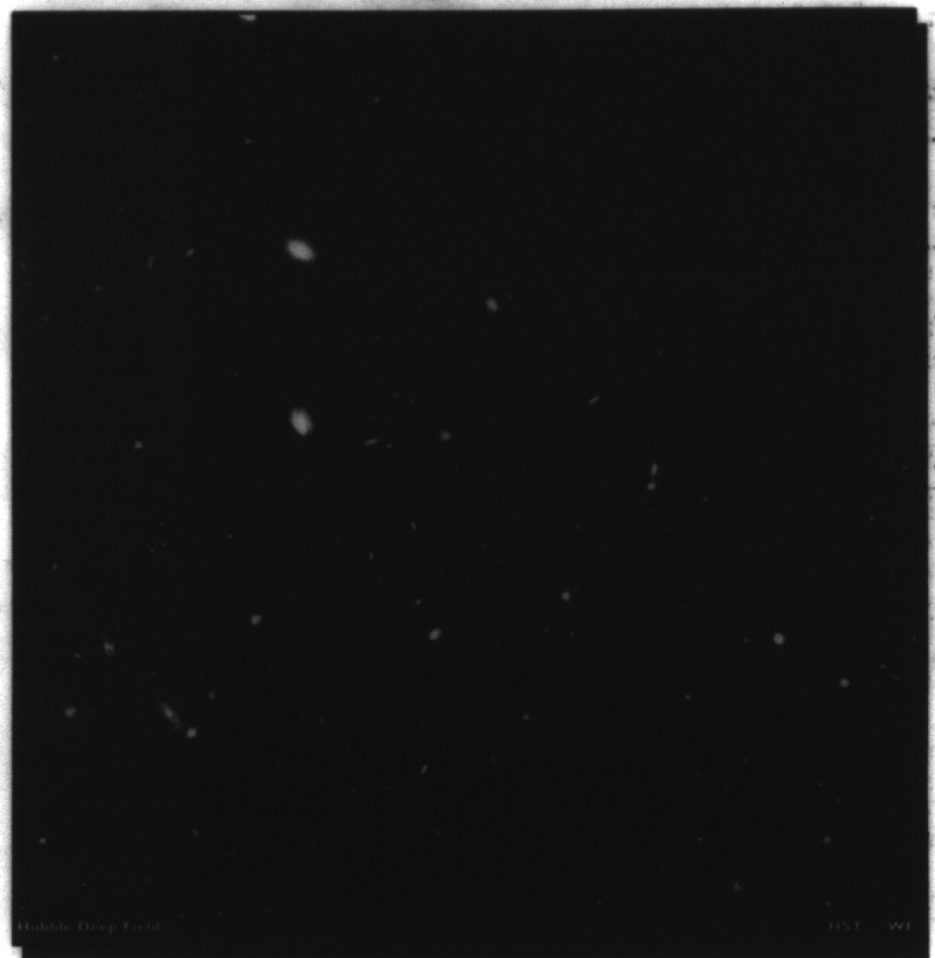
To be fair, much of the Bible is not systematically evil but just plain weird, as you would expect of a chaotically cobbled-together anthology of disjointed documents, composed, revised, translated, distorted and 'improved' by hundreds of anonymous authors, editors and copyists, unknown to us and mostly unknown to each other, spanning nine centuries. This may explain some of the sheer strangeness of the Bible. But unfortunately it is this same weird volume that religious zealots hold up to us as the inerrant source of our morals and rules for living. Those who wish to base their morality literally on the Bible have either not read it or not understood it...

It is a sad observation that these two eminently intelligent but misguided men have chosen to use their God-given talents to argue that there is no God. While they insist that religious people need to be more open-minded, they are themselves contemptuous and dismissive of anyone who holds to the concept that religious faith is an important part of the human experience.

"To fill a world with... religions of the Abrahamic kind, is like littering the streets with loaded guns. Do not be surprised if they are used," Dawkins once said.



Hubble Telescope Credit: NASA



Credit: R. Williams (STScI), Hubble Deep Field Team, NASA.

Hubble Deep Field

Perhaps atheists like Hitchens and Dawkins and others of their persuasion have simply never taken time to look to the heavens, as have actual scientists. It is there, like many millions of other places, that truly open-minded people find the fingerprints of the Supreme Creator, God.

In 1995, scientists aimed the orbiting Hubble Telescope at the farthest possible point in the universe. The image they captured is a breathtaking representation of thousands of galaxies, each composed of millions of stars, so far away from earth that they had never been seen before.

The Hubble Deep Field image convinced some of the scientists that if the Big Bang Theory is correct (God did

perhaps the universe into existence, after all), they were quite possibly peering at the beginning of everything.

"It's like looking into the face of God," said one scientist at the time.

Our God is truly a great God, capable of speaking the Hubble Deep Field galaxies into existence; managing the unimaginable complexities of the universe and still having time to knit each one of us together in our mothers' wombs; guiding the thoughts and actions of those He created; and sending His Only Begotten Son to save us from our sins.

That's not hollow philosophy, hocus-pocus, sophistry, or anything of the kind.

It is merely the truth.

Miss. CP tops \$3M in May

Gifts to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) in May showed a marked increase over the previous month and continued the rise over the same giving period last year, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson. The May total of \$3,195,324 was \$820,897, or 34.6%, above the \$2,374,427 given last month, and \$132,426, or 4.3%, above the total given in May 2006. Total Mississippi CP giving for the current fiscal year, which runs from January-December, stands at \$15,039,721 a rise of \$98,822, or .66%, over last year's giving through May and \$1,210,999, 8.8%, ahead of current budget needs. The 2007 Mississippi CP budget of \$33,188,934, was approved by messengers to the 2006 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. A total of \$2,765,745 is needed each month to meet the convention board's budget for 2007. In addition to helping support more than 10,700 missionaries in the U.S. and around the world through affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention, Mississippi CP helps fund such programs as the Small/Bivocational Pastors' Workshops at a number of locations around the state, the Family Celebration on July 4-6 at Lake Tlak O'Khata near Louisville, and Super Summer on July 7-11 at Mississippi College in Clinton.

SBC CP lower for month

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Giving to the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program in May was \$16,429,108, which was 11.5%, or \$2,133,013, below the \$18,562,121 given in April, and 4%, or \$67,195, less than the \$16,496,303 received in May 2006, according to SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. As of May 31, the year-to-date total of \$137,067,874 for Cooperative Program missions is \$2,975,906 ahead of the \$134,091,968 received at the same point in 2006. Designated giving of \$161,416,820 for the same year-to-date period is 9.23%, or \$13,635,225, above gifts of \$147,781,596 received at this point last year. The \$18,302,196 in designated gifts received last month is \$2,393,273 above the \$15,908,923 received in May 2006, an increase of 15%. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$137,067,874 is 105% of the \$130,632,282 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. It is separate from the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Fund of which 100% of monies go to aid the needy in the general public.

Creation Museum opens to large crowds

By Michael Foust
Baptist Press

PETERSBURG, Ky. (BP) — Ten-year-old Rachael Mosley smiled as she walked out of the newly opened Creation Museum, equipped with the answers about the Bible, evolution and science she had been seeking.

Her parents had brought her and her two siblings to the museum located just outside of Cincinnati on opening week. On this particular day, the Mosleys, from Bloomington, Ind., were part of the 1,000-plus people who passed through the gates of the museum that sets forth a literal interpretation of the Genesis creation account.

It opened Memorial Day with more than 4,000 visitors and cars from more than 30 states in the parking lot and is the largest museum of its kind in the world.

"We thought it was fantastic," her mother, Chere, said. "[Rachael is] going into the sixth grade, and there's a lot of talk about evolution. ... She gets mad when she watches the videos and they say 'millions of years ago.' She wanted to have more facts."

It's that type of reaction museum officials are wanting. The \$27 million, 60,000-square-foot museum — located in Petersburg, Ky., just a few miles south of the Ohio border and a quick drive from the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky airport — is a high tech answer to other natural history museums, where evolution is viewed as, well, gospel.

A product of the apologetics ministry Answers in Genesis, the museum doesn't ridicule evolutionary theory, although it does punch enough holes in it that visitors, it is hoped, are left at least scratching their heads. A few exhibits even explain evolution, comparing it side-by-side with creationism.

Museum officials have made every effort to achieve a world-class museum, and it shows. There are roaring animatronic dinosaurs, more than 50 educational videos, a planetarium and what likely is the highlight for many visitors: a special effects theater that boasts three screens, vibrating seats, simulated wind and mist.

Along the way, visitors hear a few things they won't learn at other museums:

- The earth is thousands, and not millions, of years old.

- Dinosaurs once walked the earth alongside humans, were on Noah's Ark, and are found in the Bible ("behemoth" in Job 40 and "leviathan" in Job 41).

- A flood once covered the entire planet, resulting in dramatic changes to the landscape — including the carving of the Grand Canyon.

- The teaching of Darwinian evolution in schools, and in particular the idea that life evolved from nothing, has had a devastating negative impact on society's morality.

Science, the museum asserts, affirms a literal reading of Genesis. Although many secular scientists scoff at such a notion, the museum's beliefs are more mainstream than evolutionists probably wish was the case. A March Newsweek poll found that 48% of American adults believe God made humans "pretty much in the present form at one time within the last 10,000 years or so."

The museum is the culmination of a lifelong dream of Answers in Genesis



LIFELIKE MODELS — Animatronic dinosaurs roar at the newly opened Creation Museum, a \$27 million project outside Cincinnati that affirms a biblical view of mankind's beginnings. (BP photo by Michael Foust)

President Ken Ham, who was born in Australia and taught in its public schools before moving to the United States in 1987. In 1993, he and two men, Mark Looy and Mike Zovath, launched the ministry, which now has approximately 300 employees.

"[The idea for a museum] really started when I was a high school teacher in Australia, and kids would say, 'How can you believe the Bible, when it says God made Adam and Eve? We know that's not true in light of what we're taught in textbooks regarding evolution,'" Ham said. "So, I saw evolution as being a stumbling block to these kids even thinking they could trust the Bible, and as I took them to museums, I saw evolution presented as fact and millions of years presented as fact. I thought, why can't somebody present a biblical view to them and show them that you can use mainstream science to confirm that view?"

Ham and other creationists view all science through a biblical lens — a point that is made throughout the museum. One exhibit focuses solely on the history and authority of the Bible. Another exhibit shows two paleontologists, side by side, digging for dinosaur bones. They look at the same evidence, visitors are told, but interpret their findings differently. The creationist views his findings through the Genesis account; the other paleontologist does not.

The argument by Ham and other creationists is fairly simple: Genesis is to be trusted because it was written by God, an eyewitness and the sole participant in cre-

ation. A man in one of the museum's videos makes that point: "This [Bible] was written by someone who was actually there."

Several museum displays assert that the debate over the origins of man comes down to a choice between human reason and God's Word. Some museum exhibits make mostly scientific arguments. For instance, visitors are told that most dinosaur fossils today are a result of a sudden burial, explained by the worldwide flood.

Other exhibits, though, make purely theological arguments. For example, one exhibit asserts that since Scripture teaches death entered the world through Adam, dinosaurs could not have died out before Adam existed.

"What I say to evolutionists is, 'Come on, be honest,'" Ham said. "Their starting point is that there is no God. They've redesigned science. ... Everybody has a starting point, and everyone needs to admit their starting point, and their starting points determine how they interpret the evidence."

Looking back

10 years ago

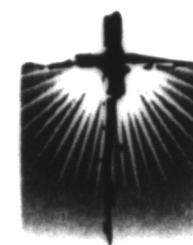
According to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Mississippi Baptists gathered in greater numbers than the previous year (1995) and gave more money to mission causes than ever before.

20 years ago

Jay Thomason and Will Patterson of Carriage Hills Church, Southaven, serve as pages during the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis. They join 13 other Royal Ambassadors and six Acteens as pages for the annual meeting.

50 years ago

R.A. McLemore, dean of Mississippi Southern College, is elected to the presidency of Mississippi College, Clinton.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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Got?

I do not understand many things in life, but one thing that is just baffling to me is how bumper sticker thoughts are processed, put on cars, and then seem to proliferate in many different directions and levels. It seems as though some conspiracy is taking place that makes it happen or some giant brain is hovering over a culture deciding that a certain concept will catch on. For instance, I have seen this bumper sticker that is catchy and I think began with the milk people. For several years, you have seen it on billboards, bumper stickers, and in magazines and stores — "Got Milk?" Some nice looking face, sometimes a celebrity, is shown drinking milk and has a white moustache on the upper lip.

Well the "Got Milk?" idea spread. I have seen numerous other ideas raised by the "Got" idea. Just the other day I saw a large SUV with a sign across the back that said, "Got Twins?" There were a number of kids in the vehicle, and I just assumed that they had twins of their own. I saw another one that said, "Got Education?" Another one that I suppose was related to that idea but maybe was more probing said, "Got Brains?"

Who comes up with these things? Who manufactures them, sells them, and puts them out there so that we can all put them on our cars? I do not know! The thoughts may not be revolutionary and may not change the world, but while traveling down the road

at 60 miles an hour it is at least a thought-provoking kind of diversion from the monotony of just trucking along. I am not anti-twins, -milk, -education, or -brains, but I wonder why someone has not made some signs that say, "Got...?" and put some really important needs on them.

One possibility is a bumper sticker that says, "Got Peace?" It may just be me, but it seems like a lot of people who are on the roads where I am driving are pretty uptight, bent out of shape, and their lives both on the road and maybe when they get to work or home are turbulent. Those of us who have come to know Jesus as Savior have experienced peace with God and the peace of God. That is not only a good thing — it is a glorious experience.

While a bumper sticker saying, "Got Peace?" may not be electrifying to people while driving along side or behind someone, the needs in many lives are so deep and so real that maybe it would stir some thought-provoking questions on where you can get peace. There is only one source of ultimate and everlasting peace, and that is from the

Prince of Peace as you surrender your life to Him.

Another helpful bumper sticker might say, "Got Hope?" It is not unusual and not the exception but maybe the rule of people who have become hopeless. Maybe they lost their job, a relationship was ruptured or ruined, or something or someone that they had put so much hope in deeply disappointed or scarred them. They walked into that dimly-lit and sad arena of life where hope seems to have been sucked from every room in their dwelling. Usually when we refer to hope, it is a kind of a dream world, but biblical hope is far different, for it is realization based on the confidence that we have in God. That is real hope and so few have ever found it.

I suppose that another "Got" sign that would gain attention, though it certainly would need explanation, is "Got Love?" Undoubtedly, part of that dimension of us that was created in the image of God is the unique and special capacity to need love and to share love with someone else. So much of what is described as

love from Hollywood and in the media today is little more than a search for self-gratification and pleasure. Real love has been set aside. Real love genuinely cares about the needs of another person, and the other person feels and knows they care. It is the way God has responded to the need in our lives and wants us to respond to His heart. That kind of love makes a difference in us individually and in every relationship that we have.

It seems to me that the ultimate "Got" sign could be and should be "Got Jesus?" You can desire all of the above needs and ideas, read about them, reach out for them, and never experience them until you have "Got Jesus." Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the dealmaker or breaker, for in Him everything can come together. Without Him you cannot find ultimate fulfillment. Walk through the pages of the New Testament and watch the flaming apostles as the church grows and spreads. Where do you find them? They are presenting to whatever dilemma and human need there may be: "Got Jesus?" One by one and then millions begin to experience the reality and the glory of a life-changing Christ come into focus. We must not lose sight of that essential truth in our own hearts, for our friends, and certainly for our families. For when you have "Got Jesus," you have the fullness of God living in your heart.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

NOBTS sets two extension centers in Miss.

New Orleans Seminary's two Mississippi extension center locations will offer a full slate of classes during the Fall 2007 semester.

Graduate students may study at the seminary's Clinton extension, which meets in Mississippi College's Alumni Hall at 200 S. Capitol Street in Clinton. Students pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degree may take classes at the seminary's Jackson extension center, located at Broadmoor Church in Madison at 1531 Highland Colony Parkway.

Returning students register for fall classes online at nobts.edu. Online registration is currently open and closes Aug. 17. New student orientation and registration will take place at both the Clinton and the Jackson extension centers on August 13 from 4-6 p.m. and at 2 p.m., respectively.

Classes begin one week later on Aug. 20. This fall will be the first time the Clinton extension center has offered two sets of classes (or cycles) for graduate students. Returning students must remain in Cycle 1, which is taught on-site in Clinton. However, new students may choose to join Cycle 2, a portion of which will be taught from the main New Orleans campus via Compressed Interactive Video.

Clinton's fall graduate class schedule is as follows:

Cycle 1

- Monday**
 11 a.m. — Spiritual Formation 1
 12 p.m. — Systematic Theology 1
 3 p.m. — Introduction to Philosophy of Religion (CIV)



NEW ORLEANS
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Extension Centers
in Clinton and Madison,
Mississippi

Cycle 2

Monday

- 9 a.m. — History of Christianity: Early to Medieval (CIV)
 11 a.m. — Spiritual Formation 1
 12 p.m. — Introductory Hebrew Grammar
 3 p.m. — Proclaiming the Bible

For Southern Baptists, classes are \$165 per semester hour in addition to the \$65 resource fee. Other Baptists must pay \$220 per semester hour, and non-Baptist tuition is \$330 per semester hour. For more information, contact Program Director Eric Pratt by phone at (601) 925-3235 or by email at epratt@mc.edu.

Undergraduate students studying at the Jackson extension center will have four classes in which to enroll. They are as follows:

Monday

- 12 p.m. — Personal Spiritual Disciplines
 1 p.m. — Introduction to Preaching
 4 p.m. — Marriage and Family Issues
 7 p.m. — Teaching Methods

Undergraduate tuition is \$170 per semester hour for Southern Baptists in addition to the \$65 resource fee. Other Baptists must pay \$230 per semester hour, and non-Baptist tuition is \$340 per semester hour. For more information regarding the Jackson extension center, contact director Julius Thompson by phone at (601) 856-4341 or by email at thompson.julius@worldnet.att.net.

COLLEGE NEWS

1. The Center for Creative Scholars at William Carey University will present the sixteenth annual Creativity Exploration July 16 through 18 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. in Thomas Business Building on the Hattiesburg campus. The 2007 Creativity Exploration offers creative students currently enrolled in grades 2 through 12 a chance to



explore, evaluate, and further develop their creative talents through poetry, creative writing, art, drama, science and photography. The tuition of \$60 covers all instructional materials, supplies, refreshments, and lunches. Students are eligible for nomination to the program by parents or teachers. For more information contact Read Diket at 601-318-6205 or rdiket@wmcarey.edu.

Visit the Baptist Record online at www.mbcb.org.

STAFF CHANGES

1. **Morrison Heights Church, Clinton**, has called Mark Metcalf as minister to youth. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. He served on the student ministries staff of Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, and was pastor to students at the Church of the Highlands, Ridgeland, before coming to Morrison Heights.



Metcalf

2. Jerald Welch, Associational Missions Director of the Holmes County Association, has retired effective May 31. A reception was held June 3, 2-4 p.m. Shown are Sue Welch, Welch, and Al Different.



2. Welch retires as AMD, Holmes Association

3. **New Hope Church, Simpson County**, has called John David McNeil as pastor. He and his wife Terri live in Seminary.
4. **Duck Hill Church, Duck Hill**, has called Chas Rowland as pastor. Rowland previously served at Harmony Church, New Albany, and holds degrees from Samford University and Mid-America Seminary. He is married to Rebekah and has a son, Charlie.

OBITUARY

Bobby Shurden, 55, died June 2. He was a native of Drew and had served as a minister of music and vocational music evangelist before being called into the pastoral ministry. He served Crestview Church, Petal, for 10 years and was pastor of Pineview Church, Forrest County, for 9 years. Survivors include his wife Peggy Shurden, Hattiesburg; son David Shurden, Galeana, Mexico; daughter Rebekah Holder, Petal; a sister, Anna Marie Shurden, Bend, Ore.; and two brothers, Phil Shurden, Grandview, Tex., and Tommy Shurden, Hammond, La.

6th Annual Father's Day Tribute!
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 Telephone: 601-624-4138
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Baptist Homes, Inc., is not affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Homecomings & Revivals

Edna Church, Columbia: Revival, June 24-27; Sun., 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jim Futral, speaker; Brad Day, music; Kenny Peavey, pastor; Len Cooke, minister of music.

Murphy Creek Church, Louisville: Revival, June 24-27; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Jeff Mann, Noxapater, speaker; David Sumner, Noxapater, music; Walter Simmons, pastor.

Palestine Church, Harrisville: Homecoming, June 24, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; David Parker, speaker.

Utica: Community Crusade, Utica football field, June 30, 7 p.m.; Bill Wright, James Bowman, speakers; Born Again Quartet, Carlin Specks, and Jack Hollingsworth, music. Bring lawn chairs.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Bible Drillers, Vaiden Church, Vaiden



2. Bible Drillers, Clear Branch Church, Wesson



3. GAs, First Church, Terry

1. **Vaiden Church, Vaiden**, recognizes its Bible Drillers who participated in state drills at First Church, Madison. Shown, front, are Maggie Holt and Mary Alldread; second row, Ashtin McLellan and Blake Holly; back row, Justin Summers, Daniel Fouche', C.J. Moore, and Tyler Wiltshire. Alldread is a nine-year Bible drill participant.

2. **Clear Branch Church, Wesson**, recognizes its children's state Bible Drill participants. Shown are Lindsey Westbrook and Candace Jeffcoat.

3. The GA's at **First Church, Terry**, were recognized on May 6, 2007, for their accomplishments in the past year. Leaders are Nancy Loar, Jennifer Clark, LuEllen McPhail, and Melissa Price. Rev. John Pace, Jr., is pastor at First, Terry.

4. Martin L. "Shorty" Carden was licensed to the ministry Mar. 18 by **Double Springs Church, Maben**. Shown are pastor Randy Futral, Carden, and Ginger Carden.

5. **Salem Church, Collins**, recently licensed Brandon Knight to the gospel ministry. Shown are Knight and Don Stewart, interim pastor.

6. **LeMoyne Boulevard Church, Biloxi**, recognizes its Bible Drillers. Shown are leader Denise King, Andrew



4. Carden licensed to ministry, Double Springs Church, Maben

McNair, Katie King, Colton Bigelow, Katrina Hise, Brittany Thompson, and Jennifer Jimenez.

7. **Covenant Life Church, Collinsville**, will host a two-night conference, *Awakening His Bride*, June 15-16, 7 p.m.

8. **Grandview Church, Pearl**, will present *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* July 1, 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground.

9. **First Church, Eupora**, is hosting the *Whisnants* in concert June 28, 7 p.m., with the Hawes Family of Eupora opening at 6:30 p.m. A love offering will be taken.

10. **Shalom Church, Silver Creek**, ordained their new pastor, Dan Ainsworth, Mar. 25. Dan West brought the challenge.



5. Knight licensed to the ministry, Salem Church, Collins



6. Bible Drillers, LeMoyne Blvd. Church, Biloxi

JUST FOR THE RECORD



MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



11. Bible Drillers, Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch



12. Bible Drillers, Shady Grove Church, Lincoln Association



12. Bible Buddies, Shady Grove Church, Lincoln Association



13. Senior Adult Fish Fry, First Church, Coldwater

11. Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, recognizes its Bible Drillers and Bible Buddies. Shown are the participants and leaders.

12. Shady Grove Church, Lincoln Association, recognizes its children's Bible Drillers and leaders. Shown are Carolyn Welch, Colton Welch, Austin Coleman, Taylor Nelson, Tanner Allen, and Kim Nelson. The church also recognizes its Bible Buddies and leaders. Shown are Lydia Pratt, Wyatt Coleman, Mary Elizabeth Allen, Terrah Nelson, and MaKayla Rodriguez.

13. Senior adults from First Church, Coldwater, attended the Northwest Association fish fry May 21. Shown are the participants.

14. The Mississippi Association RAs held their RA Race-off May 5. Shown are the 20 boys participating, representing six churches.

15. Osyka Church, Osyka, recently held its annual recognition service honoring mission groups. The RAs received advancement patches and certificates for completing mission action projects during the year. Shown are the participants.

16. Kayela Dancy, second from left, will be a summer missionary in Billings, Mont. She visited the GAs of Crowder Church, Crowder to share about her upcoming trip. Shown are the participants.

17. Several ministry assistants from Mississippi Baptist churches attended the 2007 National Conference for Ministry Assistants in Nashville, Tenn., May 2-4. Two ministry assistants received special recognition: Julia Field, Amory, was elected NASBS Vice-President-Membership, and Linda Jenkins, Yazoo City, was recognized for 50 years of service. Shown are some of the participants.



14. RA Race-off, Mississippi Association



15. RAs Recognition Service, Osyka Church, Osyka



16. Dancy visits with GAs, Crowder Church, Crowder



17. Attendees of the Ministry Assistants National Conference

Bibliocipher

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NDT QWT EWWUCT
MFWD HAC CNGHA, NDT,
PCAWET, SH ONL RWG-
GMFH; BWG NEE BECLA
ANT RWGGMFHCT ASL
ONZ MFWD HAC CNGHA.

QCDCLSL LSJ: HOCEIC

Clue: G = R

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hosea Seven:Two.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



18. Madison recognized, Mt. Nelson Church, Neshoba Assoc.



19. High School graduates honored, Bellevue Church, Pontotoc Assoc.

18. **Mt. Nelson Church, Neshoba Association**, recognized Thomas Madison on his 90th birthday for serving as the church music director for over 50 years. Shown with Madison are his children Faye Jones and Ronald Madison along with pastor Mack Alford.

high school graduates May 7. Shown are pastor Tommy Inmon, Michelle Pickens, Lauren Patton, and Justin Gates.

20. **Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale**, held Parent Dedication / Baby Recognition May 13. Shown are the five participating families. Greg Barker, pastor.

19. **Bellevue Church, Pontotoc Association**, honored their

21. **First Church, Okolona**, recognizes its children's Bible Drillers. From left, Morris Perry, Liz Perry, Hannah Henry, Mary Clark Herrod, Ryan McGee, Mary Michael Edwards, Lindsay Jagers, Tanner Vaughan, Hayden Jagers, and Callie Humphries.

♦ ♦ ♦



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS



20. Baby Dedication, Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale



21. Bible Drillers, First Church, Okolona

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JASPER COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION located in Bay Springs, Miss., is seeking a part-time bi-vocational, Association Missions Director. This is a part-time position, and the position does not include housing facilities. Please send resumes no later than July 1, 2007 to Jasper County Baptist Association, P.O. Box 385, Bay Springs, Ms. 39422.



Practical Principles for Christian Living

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION • VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 6



CALLING ALL PENNIES ...

By Jimmy Porter



The one-cent coin, commonly known as the penny, was the first currency authorized by the United States. Benjamin Franklin suggested the first design. The penny derives its name from

its British counterpart, the pence.

Pennies are plentiful. Since 1787, well over 300 billion pennies have been minted with eleven different designs. The first coins were one hundred percent copper. Paul Revere, the famous blacksmith, supplied some of the copper for the coins minted in the early 1790's. Now due to the rising price of copper, the composition is 97.5 percent zinc and 2.5 percent copper.

Pennies are powerful. On December 10, 2006, the Boston Globe ran an article entitled "Powerful Pennies." The article highlighted a high school that waged a "penny war," collecting monies for a food pantry. For years charitable organizations have used the collection of pennies to fund projects aimed at helping alleviate human need.

Pennies are precious. If you can visualize a penny being symbolic of a child, then you know what I mean. Since the Mississippi Baptist Convention began collecting pennies, I see them differently! When I see one on the ground, I stop and pick it up because to me it represents a life.

In our Memorial to the Missing there are approximately 40 million pennies now. Our goal is to collect 50 million pennies because each penny represents one of the fifty million aborted children since the 1973 Supreme Court *Roe vs. Wade* court decision.

Our aim here at the Baptist Convention is to reach our goal by the time of the Mississippi Baptist Convention in October. To do this, we **MUST** have your help.

First, those of you who have pennies but have not gotten them to us, please do so by July 31st. If you need help transporting them, call us at the Christian Action Commission at 601-292-3329, and we will have someone drop by to pick them up. If you can't get them to us but can get them to your associational office, that will be helpful.

Secondly, if you would like to make a monetary contribution, you can do



First Church, Shannon

so by sending your check to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is a 501c organization, and your gifts are tax deductible. Your dollars will be changed into pennies and placed in the memorial.

This visual aid has already had an impact on those who have stopped to see it. Time and time again visitors stop by to see it, and then they go through their pockets and purses looking for pennies to add to the Memorial. God has blessed and will continue to bless this effort.

Once again I want to emphasize that eventually 50 million pennies will be turned into dollars and placed in a trust with the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. The principal will stay intact, but the interest each year will help support pro-life causes within the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Your gifts will not only help today but will continue the battle to preserve life.

Months ago fifty million pennies was a dream, an idea, but you are making it a reality. I wish we could show and tell you all the creative ways churches have utilized to collect pennies. The First Baptist Church of Shannon allowed their children to put their pennies in makeshift parking meters. Many of you have been very creative, and we would like for you to send pictures of this to us at the Christian Action Commission.

Pennies are plentiful, pennies are powerful, and pennies are precious. We need ten million more of them — yes, we are "Calling all pennies."

If you are interested in receiving Christian Action Commission updates via the internet, please e-mail us at rwwood@christianaction.com. Include your name, address, phone number, and church name.

Associations' role key in promoting churches, missions

Sixth in a series

By Frank Lay
Correspondent

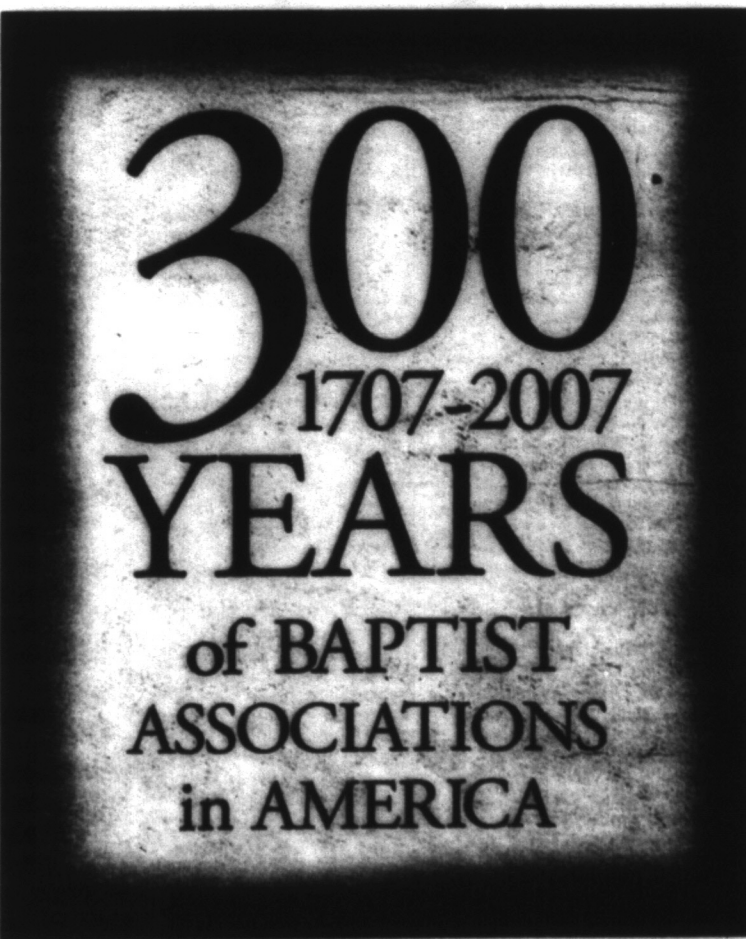
Baptist associations have contributed greatly to the development of Baptist work in America. The first association in America began when five small churches came together to organize the Philadelphia Baptist Association. From those humble beginnings, Baptist work began to flourish in America. In time the Philadelphia Association formed additional associations in Maryland, New York, Delaware, and New Jersey.

The early associations made tremendous contributions to the development of Baptist work in America in several different ways. First, early associations helped strengthen local churches. The first associations were organized to:

- preserve doctrinal unity.
 - provide for fellowship among the churches.
 - promote evangelism and missions.
- Through associations, churches worked together for mutual encouragement.

Secondly, early associations contributed to the formation of new churches and associations across America. In time, the Philadelphia association began supporting itinerant missionaries who planted churches in many states and Canada. The Charleston Baptist Association was formed in 1751 as a result of the influence of the Philadelphia association.

From the beginning, the Sandy Creek Association in North Carolina (1758) had a heart for missions that reached far beyond its local geographic area. During her first



17 years, forty-two churches were formed as a result of Sandy Creek. One hundred and twenty-five ministers were called out of the Sandy Creek area. By 1770, the Sandy Creek Association had grown sufficiently to form new associations in Virginia and South Carolina.

The first three associations contributed to the rapid growth of Baptists

in America. There were fewer than 20 Baptist churches in 1700. Within 100 years, the number of churches increased to more than 2000.

Thirdly, early associations contributed to the society approach to missions. William Carey has been known as the "Father of Modern Missions." However, Baptist associations were sending out missionaries and planting churches long before William Carey preached his famous sermon to the Kettering Baptist Association meeting in England in 1792.

Carey's sermon, entitled "Expect Great Things from God, Attempt Great Things for God," challenged the Kettering association to organize the first cooperative mission society. This led to the formation of The Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

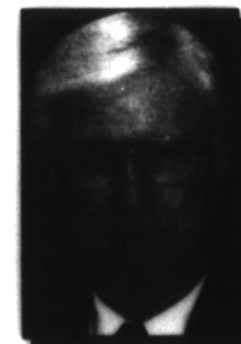
among the Heathen. In 1804, this lengthy name was changed to the Baptist Missionary Society. Though the first mission society was not an agency of the association, it was definitely a product of it.

By 1814, Baptists engaged in two basic approaches to mission work. The associational approach involved a denominational body with churches as

its base. The society approach was supported by interested people as well as contributing churches. The later denominational approach to missions depended upon cooperating churches as well as special offerings.

Fourth, early associations contributed to the formation of state and national conventions. In 1776, a movement to form a Continental Association failed because of the Revolutionary War. In 1814, Baptist associations were instrumental in organizing the Triennial Convention to support mission causes. The Triennial Convention later divided over the issue of slavery. In 1821, representatives from three South Carolina associations formed the South Carolina State Convention. Nine Baptist state conventions existed at the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845.

Baptist associations in the 21st Century continue to contribute to the spiritual health of local churches. In addition, churches in cooperation can continue having a positive impact on local communities. During these days of seeming decline, contemporary associations must recover the missionary vision of the first Baptist associations.



Lay is associational missions director for Carroll-Montgomery Association in Winona. He may be contacted at carmont@bellsouth.net. Final installment next week: The model Baptist association.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

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It's VBS time and once again
The Baptist Children's Village
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Reigning Miss Mississippi and Miss America top five finalist, Taryn Foshee, was the special guest at the "for girls only" brunch at The Baptist Children's Village. She shared with the girls about her about the hard work and persistence it took to accomplish her dreams and encouraged them to dream big and give all they have to achieve their goals. After sharing about her experience at both the Miss Mississippi and Miss America pageants she allowed the girls to ask lots of questions. After her speech Taryn spent time autographing photos for each girl. Shown is Foshee with Lauren Thompson, daughter of BCV houseparents Steve and Leigh Ann Thompson.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Remember the Lord is God

Deuteronomy 8:1-14, 17, 18

By Laura Leathers

Why is it important for people to remember the past? The answer could be summed up in two words: encouragement and assurance. Additionally, for the Christian, remembering God's faithfulness brings hope for the future. In this week's lesson Moses continues his second address to the nation of Israel with a strong command, "you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way ..." (Deut. 8:2; see also 8:15; 9:7, 27).

Therefore ...

1. Do You Learn from the Lord's Discipline? (Deut. 8:1-5)

In this passage of Scripture Moses reminds the younger generation it was rebellion and rejection which brought God's chastisement (vs. 5) upon the nation of Israel. The forty-year wilderness journey, the Lord's discipline, was a time of test-

ing, refining, teaching, and training.

One aspect of teaching for the young Jewish children was to have them recite from memory, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." (Deut. 6:4-5). This confession of faith was known as the "Shema" and means "to hear" (Matt. 22:37; Luke 10:27).

Moses recalls how the older generation had to learn the importance of humbling themselves before the Lord (Psalm 147:6; Is. 57:15; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6). Humbleness should lead to a greater hunger and thirst for righteousness. For the nation of Israel, hunger brought food they did not know — manna from heaven. "Israel's food in the wilderness was decreed by the



Leathers

Word of God," writes Dr. John MacArthur in the MacArthur Study Bible, "They had manna because it came by God's command; therefore, ultimately it was not bread that kept them alive, but God's Word" (cf. Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4).

Scripture states, "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." (Prov. 4:23). For our character to grow more and more like Christ's, we must go through the Lord's loving discipline, learning His desires for us.

2. Do You Trust the Lord's Purposes? (Deut. 8:6-10)

The Blackaby Bible calls the following verses the "Prerequisites for Divine Guidance." "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6).

Divine Guidance is exactly what the nation of Israel received when they were set free from Egypt. Their destination was always the Promised Land —

their inheritance, not the wilderness. Over and over again they were told, "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Lord, walk in His ways, and fear Him." (Deut. 8:6). However, they had to make the choice to trust God. God's covenant promise meant they would be walking into a lush land overflowing with springs of water; a land which would produce vegetation like they had never seen. They would lack nothing, and when they had eaten and were full, they were to bless the Lord.

Remember God gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him.

3. Do You Remember Your Source of Success? (Deut. 8:11-14, 17-18)

An Open Letter to the People of Israel: Lest You Forget ...

The mighty Red Sea your ancestors were told to cross,

The waters parted, and not a person was lost.

Exile came when the Passover Lamb's blood marked the door,

Slavery in Egypt, lasting 400 years, now would be no more.

On Mount Sinai they saw the fire, heard God speak;

With His finger wrote the Ten

Commandments for you to keep.

Every measurement and detail of the Tabernacle was given, Behind the curtain is the Holy of Holies, a foretaste of heaven.

I, Moses, was called to teach and lead this mighty Nation,

The Promised Land would be your final destination.

Believe and love the Lord your God, and blessings will ensue,

Disobedience and rebellion means curses are certainly due.

Be Encouraged, for you are God's treasured possession,

A witness of God's grace and mercy to all the nations.

Now, go in, possess the land, Resolve to spiritually renew.

Above all else, REMEMBER Jehovah is God to you.

His Servant, Moses

Success is not based upon your abilities, but in your willingness to have a humble heart, a hunger for God's Word, enthusiasm to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. Now that's the way you spell S-U-C-C-E-S-S!

The Poem, Lest You Forget, is ©2007, by Laura Leathers

Leathers is a member of First Church, Durant.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Affirm God's Justice

Nahum 1:1-3, 7-8, 3:1-7, 19

By Charles Rodgers

There have always been individuals, organizations, and even governments in the world that have oppressed certain segments of society. History books are replete with stories of human injustice. We are certainly not immune to it today. In our own country, certain socio-economic groups and races of people suffer injustice and oppression because of greed, intimidation, and/or prejudice. However, God's Word teaches us that God's wrath is against all who are guilty of unjust and oppressive actions. The book of Nahum is a good example of God's prophetic voice toward those who practice oppression.

Nahum literally means "comfort of God," and while it prophesies the utter demise of the city

of Nineveh, it really provides a strong message of comfort to the children of God. This short book forms a sequel to the Book of Jonah. The repentance of Nineveh under Jonah simply delayed the judgment of God for about a century. However, the Ninevites returned to their sinful ways, and Nahum warns them that God will put an end to their injustice to His people. Nahum prophesied during the seventh century BC and is considered by many to be the most impassioned of all the prophets.

I. Nahum reminds us to Understand God's Competency. Nahum 1:1-3

While the Lord may not immediately deal with the wicked, He is entirely competent to bring the guilty to justice, and He will certainly do so. The



Rodgers

statement "the Lord is jealous" is not being used here to describe the character of God, but rather to infer the activity of God. The Holman Christian Standard Bible puts it this way: "the Lord is a jealous and avenging God." It means that God always acts

protectively against all that would seek to harm what is His. Verse three reinforces verse two and indicates that God will impart patient, yet appropriate, vengeance upon His enemies. God will execute justice — of that we can be sure. When injustice prevails, this is not a sign of God's indifference or inability to deal with it. Don't give up. God can and will come to the rescue.

II. Nahum also invites us to Affirm God's Nature. Nahum 1:7-8

Here we find a brief glimpse into the nature of God. God is good! The Psalmist said in Psalm 34:8, "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good." But he is not just talking about His holi-

ness or His attitude here. He is referring to His care for His own. God is good to us! He is a stronghold in the day of trouble or distress. He takes care of those who have turned to Him. As we experience injustice personally or as we seek to assist those who are under oppression, we must express and illustrate this truth. No matter what we are going through, God is good to us! He is "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" — Psalm 46:1. He is able to comfort us while at the same time utterly destroying our enemies. Verses 7 and 8 reveal two extremes in God's nature. On the one hand is His comfort for the oppressed, and we could find no greater comfort. On the other hand is His destruction of our enemies, and we could witness no more exhaustive punishment. It is comfort to the max versus defeat to the max. God is good!

III. Nahum encourages us to Implement God's Standards. Nahum 3:1-7, 19

These verses prophesy Nineveh's destruction and

humiliation. But they also provide a glimpse into the standards by which the Lord judges individuals and nations. The business leaders used deceit and corruption in their endeavor to build up the city as a center of world commerce. They have gotten rich at the expense of the poor. Greed, idolatry, and immorality prevail. Nahum calls Nineveh the city of blood. He paints a dismal word picture of the utter destruction of this city. The standards by which God judged, condemned and destroyed the city were injustice, immorality and unfaithfulness. God's people need to understand God's standards of justice and work hard at seeing that these standards are observed in their communities. Christians must practice living by God's standards and must assist the oppressed in their communities to find freedom from the injustices forced upon them.

Rodgers is Associational Missions Director for Jackson Association and a member of First Church, Gautier.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted.



Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to crop-

ping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Baptist volunteers continue meeting needs on Coast

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

For many people across the country, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina is "out of sight, out of mind" — but for Mission Service Corps volunteer and area six representative and consultant Juanita West, not only is Katrina very much on her mind, she daily views the storm's devastation at the beginning of another hurricane season.

West is presently serving Mississippi Baptists at First Southern Baptist Church in Pearlington, in Gulf Coast Association. When the storm surge hit, the Pearlington church was submerged. Even now, while the church has been fundamentally rebuilt, within a stone's throw are destroyed houses, rubble, beached boats, and other debris.

Many houses are in the same state as they were immediately after Katrina. Yet the air reverberates with the sound of construction, as new homes are being built alongside the many trailers already in place.

West is a member of Calvary Church in Newton. "I'm here all the time," she said, speaking of Pearlington. "When we have groups here, I'm here. From the middle of February to the end of March, I didn't go home."

A generous person donated a fifth-wheel travel trailer to the church, and West lives in it while on the field.

"I have never really worked in a disaster relief situation before beginning here," West said. "In September of 2006, I contacted Jim Didlake's office (in the Men's Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board), said I was ready to go to work, and asked for suggestions. They sent me a list with four names on it. I called Pearlington first, and here I am."



West

"The story of Pearlington should actually be about David and Patty Baldwin," West continued, modestly. "They're the people who actually set up this program, and they did a fantastic job. They are members of First Church, Vicksburg. They had decided that it was time for them to finish up their earlier work here, so I talked to Patty, came down and visited with them, and we prayed about it. They were here from day one, getting the whole volunteer and working program set up. I just picked up where they left off."

Scores of volunteer groups have come to work at Pearlington. When a volunteer group comes in, a member of the church, Shelia Jordan, takes the reservations for the group and coordinates the work orders.

"In order for us to help someone in Pearlington, that person has to come in to the church and fill out a work order," explained West.

Most teams come on either Saturday or Sunday. "We try to match them with the jobs they're skilled for," West said. "Sometimes we don't know until they get here what skills they have. We'll pull work orders, and the groups will go to see what jobs they think they're able to do."

"A lot of them bring the tools they need, but we now have all sorts of tools available. If we have a lot of teams in, it'd be helpful if they'd bring as many tools as they could."

"It's also helpful if they have a cook or a cook team," West said, wryly.

Both the parsonage and the church are available to house volunteers. The parsonage has bunk beds for 28 people, and there are bunk beds and air mattresses at the church. If the group is larger, they have to provide their own bedding.

Teams come from all over, West said. "We had a team here in February from Anchorage, Alaska, and so often when teams come once, they want to come back. We hope to see the Anchorage group again this year."

The teams in Pearlington do not frame houses. Typically, they do other types of construction.

"The attitudes of the people we help are so good," said West. "They are so grateful for volunteers. One lady who is in line to get a home said, 'It's all about the timing, and I'll have my home in God's time.'"

"We have repeat churches down here, and many of them have given generously to our needs at the church," West said. "We have an association in North Carolina who has promised us two years of work, and they send down a team every month."

The needs continue to be extraordinary. "I heard one report that the census here included about 1,700 people in 850 homes," said West. "After Katrina, only three homes were habitable."

With so much left to be done, West turned her attention to preparation for the next group. "There's a group from First Church, Tupelo coming down for the weekend," she said. "They've adopted a home here."

For more information on the continuing Mississippi Baptist ministries along the Gulf Coast, contact the Men's Ministry Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: cwright@mbcb.org. Web site: www.mbcb.org.

Redesigned Acteens meeting to kick off in Kansas City

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) — The stage is set for thousands of girls to gather on July 10-13 for "Blume" — four days of worship, interactive conferences, hands-on missions and ministry projects, concerts, nightly fun activities, and new friends — previously known as the National Acteens Convention (NAC).

More than 6,000 girls from across the nation are expected in Kansas City, Mo., for the missions event designed to encourage them to recognize their gifts and live out their God-given purpose.

Blume is the German word for "flower" representing growth, youth, and new life. The event is open to all girls ages 12 and up, including collegiate young women.

"The purpose of Blume will be accomplished in our minds and hearts if girls leave empowered with the realization that God has a plan and purpose for their lives," Blume program coordinator Suzanne Reece said. "They are each uniquely gifted, and God can use them even now to make a difference in the world and to accomplish His mission."

Taking a holistic approach to serving God and others, Blume is based on Luke 10:27 when Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. And, love your neighbor as yourself."

Encouraging girls to truly love their neighbor as themselves, the event will provide

various ways for participants to give according to their personalities and interests. And through interactive stations, the girls will be able to connect with missions efforts from around the world.

Throughout the conference, Celia Whittier, a Christian recording artist and songwriter, will lead the girls in praise and worship. Although Blume will include time for all the participants to gather together, specific activities and times of worship have been planned just for the collegiate audience. Cindy Johnson, a Christian songwriter, singer and guitarist, will minister to the collegiate young women through worship and testimony.

For the feature concert, Bethany Dillon, an 18-year-old recording artist and Dove Award nominee, will sing about God's grace, mercy and love.

The cost to attend Blume is \$149 per person if staying within the block of hotels reserved for Blume or \$199 per person if reservations are made outside the block of rooms. Registration is now open and can be completed by telephone, fax, mail or online.

For more information on Blume, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union, visit



blume

www.blumeforgirls.com or send e-mail to blume@wmu.org.

Many states are coordinating travel packages to Blume so large groups of girls in their state can travel together. Further information is available from state Woman's Missionary Union offices.

Blume was previously known as the National Acteens Convention. WMU launched Acteens, a missions organization for girls in grades seven through 12, in 1970. Through Acteens, girls are inspired and challenged to serve others and fulfill their part in God's plan as they pray for and learn about other cultures and missionary work, both nationally and internationally.

The first NAC was held in 1972 at LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center near Santa

Fe, N.M. Taking place approximately every four to five years, subsequent National Acteens Conventions have been in Memphis, Tenn., in 1975; Kansas City, Mo., in 1979; Fort Worth, Texas, in 1984; San Antonio, Texas, in 1989; Birmingham, Ala., in 1994; Louisville, Ky., in 1998; and Nashville, Tenn., in 2003.

Now known as Blume, this event is larger in scope as this year is it open to all teen girls whether they are involved in Acteens or not. This is also the first year the event has offered a track for collegiate young women.

For registration information, visit www.blumeforgirls.com. MySpace: www.myspace.com/blume07 E-mail: blume@wmu.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Bellevue Church, Pontotoc County: June 18-22, 6:30-8:30 p.m., ages 4-12 years.

Gore Springs Church, North Central Association: June 18-22, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 3-6th grade. Lunch furnished.

Terry's Creek Church, Magnolia: June 25-29, 8:30-11:30 a.m.; family night, June 29.

Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth: June 18-22, 9:00 a.m.-noon, ages 2 yrs.-6th grade.